



# Gretchen VanOrmer

"My KAL-TEC classes were fantastic. They were an outstanding opportunity to have exposure to the health care industry and to employers' expectations."

Gretchen VanOrmer attended KAL-TEC's Basic Healthcare Class last summer. She says the two-week class was fantastic. "I really got a lot out of it. The presenters were very knowledgeable."

Gretchen and 14 other students learned about the realities of working as a certified nurse aide. They witnessed instructors role-play behaviors of the elderly with dementia, and demonstrate how to handle difficult situations. Even with this reality check, Gretchen knew she wanted to pursue a career in the health field. She went on to KAL-TEC's Certified Nurse Aide class provided by Kalkaska Memorial Health Center (KMHC). She graduated and impressed the instructors. They hired her shortly after graduation.

Gretchen is also pursuing her Bachelor's Degree in Management & Organization Development from Spring Arbor University. "I only have to get my electives and then I'll be done," says Gretchen.

"Gretchen is an excellent student and a role model for others hoping to fulfill their dreams, regardless of the obstacles," said Elaine Wood, instructor for two of Gretchen's courses at Spring Arbor. "I know she will go far."





# Dawn Taylor

"I love it—I wouldn't change anything about my job!"

*Catch it!*

Dawn Taylor has always wanted to work in the healthcare field. "My sister, mom, grandma, and two aunts are all working in a medical career," she says. She was working in a fast food restaurant when her sister told her about the Basic Healthcare Training offered through KAL-TEC. It looked like the perfect opportunity to try out her dream, so she called Kalkaska Michigan Works! Dawn was able to use Classroom Training funds through the Workforce Investment Act, and enrolled in the class.

In the Basic Healthcare Training, Dawn learned some of the basics like how to check vital signs. But the real benefit of the class was the reality check. "We learned about the realities of the job, like what people are really like when they have dementia." Instructors imitated some of the difficult behaviors exhibited by people with dementia, and demonstrated the proper way for direct care workers to handle the situation. It gave students like Dawn a realistic understanding of working in the healthcare field, and allowed them to make a fully informed decision about continuing in this field. Dawn and 13 others in the class continued to Certified Nurse Aide training at Kalkaska Memorial Health Center Dawn was hired as a CNA at the facility upon her graduation from the program. She is now working full-time on the third shift.

Dawn's experience shows how workforce development programs work together to best serve the needs of our customers. KAL-TEC and Michigan Works! staff worked hand-in-hand to provide needed education and guidance.

"I love it—I wouldn't change anything about my job," says Dawn. She plans to continue her education and eventually





# Dorrine Wilson

At age 48, Dorrine's job was outsourced. She knew that a diploma would help her job search, so she attended the Kalkaska Michigan WORKS! Learning Lab and obtained her diploma on June 16, 2005.

Dorrine knows that with education, the doors are open for the taking. She can attend college and get hired in jobs that require schooling. Most importantly, education provided her with self confidence and hope for the future.

Dorrine attended KAL-TEC's Basic Healthcare Training in the summer of 2006, then went on to graduate from the Certified Nurse Aide program. She is now employed by Kalkaska Memorial Health Center. She is also being honored this month as the Michigan Works! Alumni of the Year from the Northwest Michigan region.

"Most of all,  
education has given  
me the self  
confidence of  
knowing I'm not a  
failure, that I can  
obtain and do  
whatever I want in  
life."

*catch it!*





# Elizabeth Springer

"I was able to talk about my new skills in job interviews. I knew it made me more marketable to employers."

Elizabeth Springer had been working in the financial department of a local manufacturer for ten years when they downsized. The prospect of finding a new job after that amount of time was daunting, so she visited the Kalkaska Michigan Works! center for help. Elizabeth found that many job postings required knowledge of Microsoft Word and the Internet, two skills she did not have. "I knew I would need to brush up on skills. KAL-TEC offered the classes I needed."

Elizabeth took Introduction to Microsoft Word, Internet Basics, and Interviewing Workshop from the KAL-TEC curriculum. When she applied for new jobs, she was able to list Word and the Internet as skills. "It felt good to put Word on my resume. I knew it made me more marketable to employers."

Her new skills and dedication paid off. When she interviewed with the Commission on Aging in Antrim County, she mentioned her new computer skills. She also knew from her Interviewing Workshop that thank you notes are an important part of follow-up after an interview. This impressed the employer. She was hired full time at the COA and uses Word and the Internet daily on the job. "I feel more comfortable with these skills, and I am learning more all the time."